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Labour Market Characteristics of the BC Immigrant Population

Immigrant employment rates

Since January 2006, Statistics Canada has been collecting data through the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS) on the labour market characteristic of immigrants in Canada. In general, immigrants tend to have lower employment rates[1] in full- and part-time jobs compared to individuals born in Canada. The full-time employment rate gap between the Canadian-born and foreign-born population (age 15 plus) is notable with a difference of 6.1 percentage points. Recent immigrants who landed between 5 and 10 years ago had the highest employment rates in both the full- and part-time categories of all landed immigrants in 2010 (49.5% and 12.9% respectively). This is partially due to the higher proportion of working age individuals (25-54) in the recent immigrant (landed 5 to 10 years ago) category. Recent immigrants are comprised of over 70.5% working age individuals, while established immigrants (10+ years) only have a 41.8% share of working age individuals.

Employment rates of immigrants by period of landing and Canadian-born in percent, population (15 plus)

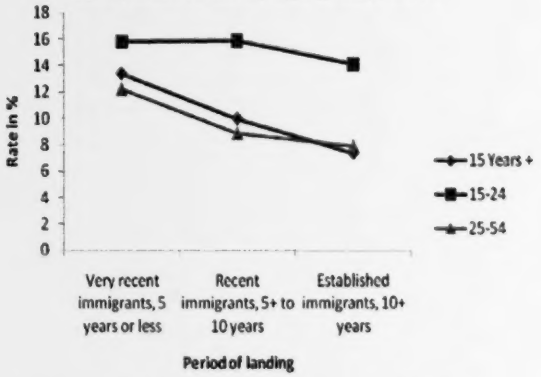
	Full-time	Part-time
Total population	**46.9**	**13.6**
Total landed immigrants	42.8	10.9
Very recent immigrants (5 years or less)	45.5	12.1
Recent immigrants (5 to 10 years)	49.5	12. 9
Established immigrants (10+ years)	41.2	10.3
Non-landed immigrants	40.6	9.7
Born in Canada	48.9	14.8

Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada

[1] The employment rate (or the employment population ratio) is the number of persons employed expressed as a percentage of the population.

Very recent immigrants (landed 5 years or less) and recent immigrants (landed 5 to 10 years ago) face higher unemployment rates than established immigrants (10+ years). In 2010, very recent immigrants between the ages of 25-54 had an unemployment rate of 12.2%; this is 4.3 percentage points higher than the unemployment rate of established immigrants (7.9%). As shown below this pattern holds true for all age categories. In addition to period of landing, there are several other factors that can influence unemployment rates including educational attainment, language barriers, foreign credentials, and knowledge of labour market conditions.

Unemployment rates by age group, 2010



Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada

When observing the labour force participation rates between men and women of identical immigration statuses (i.e., very recent, 5 years or less), there is a disparity. Female immigrants tend to have lower participation rates than male immigrants, regardless of the date of landing. Canadian-born women also tend to have lower participation rates than men; however, the difference is not as pronounced—82.9% for women compared with 90.8% for men (25 to 54 years of age). Very recent immigrant women have a

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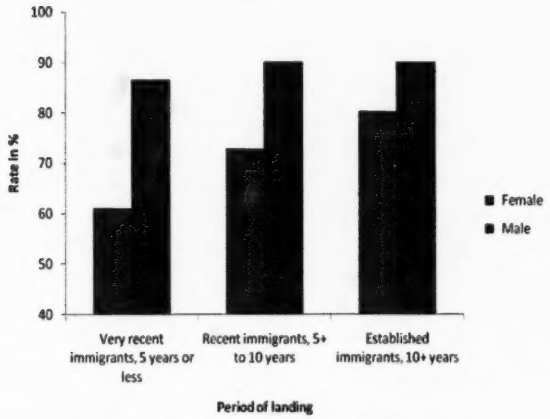
labour force participation rate of 60.9%—25.6 percentage points lower than their male counterparts.

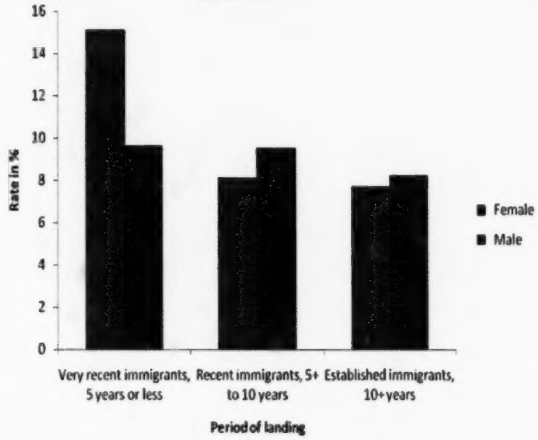
Participation rates by gender (25-54 years of age), 2010



Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada

The unemployment rates for the core working age immigrant women (25-54 years) are on the rise—the unemployment rate increased from 5.3% in 2008 to 7.5% in 2009 and finally to 8.9% in 2010. Canadian-born women of the same age have much lower unemployment rates for the same periods, with their 2008 unemployment rate of 3.5% increasing to 5.5% in 2009 and edging down slightly to 5.2% in 2010. Additionally, from 2009 to 2010, Canadian-born women (25-54) have had lower unemployment rates than Canadian-born men whose unemployment rates have been 7.3% in 2009 and 6.9% in 2010. This pattern of lower unemployment rates for women holds true for established and recent immigrants but not for very recent immigrants.

Unemployment rates by gender (25-54 years of age), 2010



Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada

Occupational mix of immigrants

The occupations that garner the largest proportion of immigrant workers are the sales and service occupations; business, finance and administrative occupations and finally; trades, transport and equipment operator occupations. Sales and service occupations employ 25.4% of immigrant workers, while business, finance and administrative occupations and trades, transport and equipment operators employ 16.7% and 14.0% of immigrants respectively. As a side note, both Canadian-born individuals and landed immigrants enter the noted occupations at similar rates.

The time of landing appears to have an impact on the individual's likelihood of being employed within a specific occupation group. For example, the following graph illustrates that an individual who has been in the country for more than 10 years are more likely to be employed in a health occupation than an individual who landed less than 5 years ago—8.5% and 5.3% respectively. Conversely, an immigrant who landed less than 5 years ago is more likely to be

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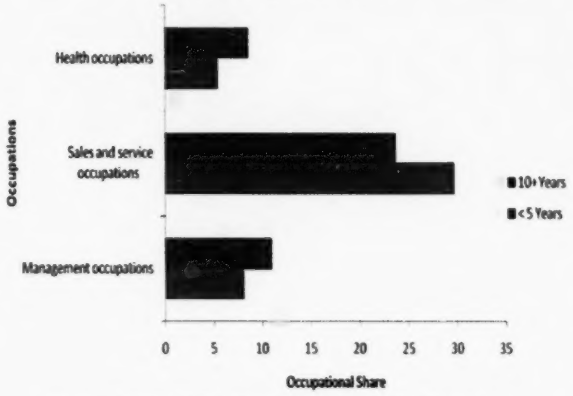
employed in a sale or service occupation when compared to an established immigrant (10+ years) (29.7% and 23.6% respectively).

Selected occupation rates for immigrants (25-54 years of age), 2010

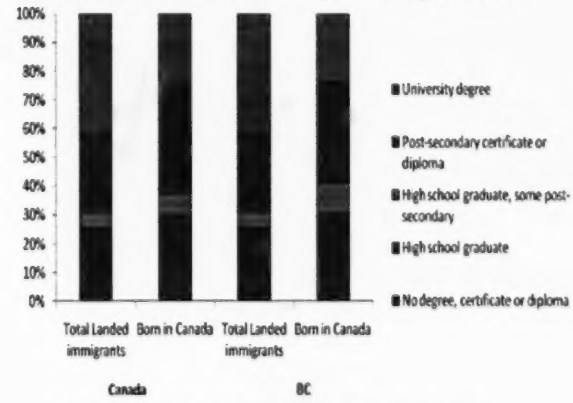


Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada

Education levels and employability

According the Labour Force Survey, of the total landed immigrants; over 69% hold a post-secondary credential (university degree, post secondary diploma or certificate). The educational make-up of BC's immigrant population is similar to Canada's immigrant population's educational attainment distribution.

Education attainment (25-54 years of age), 2010



Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada

Based on the previous chart, when compared to Canada as a whole, BC's landed immigrants have a slightly higher proportion of university degree holders (41% for BC and 40% for Canada). The proportion of landed immigrants in BC with a post-secondary certificate or diploma is 28.2%; this is slightly less than Canada's rate of 29.0% and far less than BC's Canadian-born population (35.9%).

The following table shows that a landed immigrant holding a university degree is more likely to be employed full-time as period of landing increases. The full-time employment rate for very recent immigrant was 53.5% in 2010; this is 14.9 percentage points less than the full-time employment rate for those who have been in Canada for more than 10 years (established immigrants).

Employment rates of immigrants by period of landing and Canadian-born with university degree in percent, population aged 25-54, BC, 2010

	Full-time	Part-time
Very recent immigrants, 5 years or less	53.5	10.7
Recent immigrants, 5+ to 10 years	66.3	9.4
Established immigrants, 10+ years	68.4	13.3
Born in Canada	74.8	14.7

Source: Labour Force Survey 2010, Statistics Canada

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Interestingly, if we compare unemployment rates for individuals of the same educational attainment, between landed immigrants and Canadian-born individuals, the largest disparity occurs with those who hold a bachelor degree. Canadian-born bachelor degree holders (25-54) had an unemployment rate of 3.8% in 2010 while immigrants with the same education level have an unemployment rate of 9.3%, a difference of 5.5 percentage points.

Summary

In general, the time of landing has large implications for the labour market success of BC immigrants. The data suggests that as the length of residency increases, the individual is more likely to be employed full-time. It is also observed that the unemployment rate for landing immigrants (15 years and over) declines drastically when the individual moves from very recent (landing less than 5 years ago) to recent immigrant status (more than 5 years ago) (13.4% vs. 7.8%).

For more information on the Labour Force Characteristics of the Immigrant Population please visit:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/lss/lfs/imm/imm.asp